

## Naturally Occurring Activities Within the School Environment (used to design a sensory diet with the school team)

1. Place chairs on desks at end of day or take down at beginning of day.
2. Erase the chalkboard/dry erase board.
3. Wash desks and/or chalkboard/dry erase board.
4. Help rearrange desks in the classroom.
5. Help the janitor with emptying wastebaskets, mopping the floor, etc.
6. Fill egg crates (small ones that students can carry) with books to take to other classrooms. Teachers could ask students to move these crates back and forth as needed.
7. Help the gym teacher move mats, hang them up, etc.
8. Take chewy candy breaks with licorice, Fruit Roll-ups, Starburst or Tootsie Rolls.
9. Take crunchy food breaks with dry cereal, vegetables, pretzels or popcorn.
10. Sharpen pencils with a manual sharpener.
11. Cut out items for display from oak tag.
12. Carry appropriately heavy notebooks to the office or from class to class.
13. Carry books with both hands hugging the book to the chest.
14. Push the lunch cart or carry a lunch bin to the cafeteria.
15. Staple paper onto bulletin boards.
16. In the classroom, fasten a large phone book to the bottom of the student's chair with heavy duty tape. The teacher can re-arrange the student's schedule so the student has to move to a different location within the classroom (carrying or pushing his/her weighted chair) between certain subjects or activities.
17. Have the student move several packs at a time of Xerox paper from the storage area to the school copy center.
18. Use the Ellison cut-out machine. Students can collect orders from teachers (who provide the paper and use these cut-outs for bulletin boards, etc.) and then press out the number of pieces required under the supervision of an adult. This very heavy work is a great strategy for organizing behavior.
19. Climb on playground equipment.
20. Swing from the trapeze bar.
21. Perform sports activities that involve running and jumping.
22. Run around the track at school.
23. Push against a wall. For younger students, you can use the idea that "the room feels small this morning. Can everyone help me push the walls out to make the room bigger?"
24. Fill up big toy trucks with heavy blocks, push with both hands to knock things down.
25. Have the student color a "rainbow" with large paper on the floor while on hands and knees.
26. Play "cars" under a table in the classroom where the student pushes the car with one hand while creeping and weight bearing on the other hand.
27. Open doors for people.
28. Use squeeze toys that can be squeezed quietly on the student's lap under the desk so that the student does not disturb the class.
29. Do chair push-ups.
30. Do animal walks (crab walk, bear walk, army crawl).
31. Jump on a mini trampoline.
32. Stack chairs.
33. Take isometric exercise breaks.

## Naturally Occurring Activities Within the Home (used to design a sensory diet with the family)

1. Carry heavy items (baskets with cardboard blocks, groceries for Mom, etc.).
2. Chew gum, eat chewy or crunchy foods, or sip water from a water bottle with a straw while doing homework.
3. Push or pull boxes with toys or a few books in it (more resistance is provided if boxes are pushed/pulled across a carpeted floor).
4. Fill a pillowcase with a few stuffed animals in it for weight. Child can then push or pull the pillowcase up a ramp, incline or stairs.
5. Take the cushions off sofas, vacuum under them, then put them back. Can also climb on them or jump and "crash" into them.
6. Pull other children around on a sheet or blanket.
7. Roller skate/rollerblade uphill.
8. Pull a heavy trash can.
9. Perform household chores, such as:
  - vacuuming,
  - sweeping,
  - mopping,
  - dusting,
  - carrying the laundry basket,
  - wiping off the table after dinner,
  - carrying buckets of water to clean with or to water flowers/plants/trees,
  - cleaning windows or the fronts of appliances, using a spray bottle,
  - scrubbing rough surfaces with a brush, and
  - helping change the sheets on the bed (then tossing the linens down the stairs).
10. Perform yard work, such as:
  - mowing the lawn,
  - raking the grass/leaves,
  - pushing the wheelbarrow,
  - shoveling sand into a wheelbarrow, pushing the wheelbarrow to a spot, dumping out sand and using a rake to level it out (functional for filling in low spots in backyard).
  - digging dirt to help plant flowers.
11. Pull a friend or heavy items in a wagon.
12. Push a friend in a wheelbarrow.
13. Drink thick liquids (as in milkshake, applesauce, or Slurpy) through a straw. The thickness of the straw and the thickness of the liquid can be varied to change the degree of heavy work (sucking) required.
14. Carry heavy cushions.
15. Have pillow fights.
16. Play in sandbox with damp heavy sand.
17. Push chairs into the table after a meal.
18. Push a child's cart filled with cans and then put the cans away on a low shelf so that the child has to be on hands and knees (a weight bearing position) to put the cans away.
19. Participate in activities such as gymnastics, horseback riding, wrestling, karate, swimming (can also have child dive after weighted sticks thrown in pool).
20. Bathe the dog.
21. Wash the car.
22. Jump or climb in inner tubes.
23. Fill up a small suitcase with heavy items (such as books) and push/pull the suitcase across the room.
24. Pull a small suitcase on wheels.
25. Go "shopping" with a child's shopping cart filled with items, or have the child push the shopping cart when you go shopping.
26. Go "camping" by pulling a heavy blanket pulled across a few chairs.
27. Rearrange bedroom furniture.
28. Put large toys and equipment away.
29. Participate in climbing activities (such as playground equipment).
30. Swing from the trapeze bar.
31. Push against a wall.
32. Fill up big toy trucks with heavy blocks, push with both hands to knock things down.
33. Participate in sports activities involving running and jumping.
34. On hands and knees, color a "rainbow" with large paper on the floor or with sidewalk chalk outside.
35. Play "cars" under the kitchen table where the child pushes the car with one hand while creeping and weight bearing on the other hand.
36. Walk up a ramp or incline.
37. Make wood projects requiring sanding and hammering.
38. Play a pushing game where two people lock hands facing each other and try to see who can push and make the other person step back first. Use other body parts also, but be sure to have rules (no hitting, no biting, no scratching, one person says stop then both stop).
39. Sit on the floor, back to back, with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Interlock arms, and then try to stand up at the same time.
40. Play "row, row, row your boat" both sitting on the floor, pushing and pulling each other.
41. Open doors for people.
42. Do chair push-ups.
43. Play jumping games such as hopscotch and jump rope.
44. Jump on a mini trampoline.
45. Bounce on a Hippoly Hop Ball.
46. Play catch with a heavy ball, or bounce and roll a heavy ball.
47. Do animal walks (crab walk, bear walk, army crawl).
48. Stack chairs.